DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 299 448 CE 051 101

TITLE Amendments to H.R. 18, the American Conservation Act of 1987. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, One Hundredth Congress, Second Session.

INSTITUTION Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. House Committee on Education and Labor.

PUB DATE 18 May 88

NOTE 52p.; Serial No. 100-71.

AVAILABLE FROM Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; Community Programs; *Conservation (Environment); *Disadvantaged Youth; *Employment Programs; *Federal Programs; Hearings; Job Training; Young Adults; Youth Employment; *Youth Programs

IDENTIFIERS *American Conservation Act 1987 Amendments; Congress 100th

ABSTRACT

This report contains oral and written testimony of persons who appeared at a hearing on amendments to H.R. 18, the American Conservation Act of 1987. The act is intended to provide jobs for youth, especially poor, inner-city youth who have dropped out of high school or who lack basic skills, while providing necessary clean-up and development services for the country. The seven witnesses who testified at the hearing included members and directors of city, county, and/or state conservation corps and youth corps. The witnesses testified to the successes of their programs and of the need for more such programs. All were in favor of passage of the Conservation Act Amendments. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CE

ED299448

AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 18, THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION ACT OF 1987

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MAY 18, 1988

Serial No. 100-71

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and Labor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

87-857 WASHINGTON : 1988

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office
U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402

CE051101

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

AUGUSTUS F. HAWKINS, California, *Chairman*

WILLIAM D. FORD, Michigan
JOSEPH M. GAYDOS, Pennsylvania
WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY, Missouri
MARIO BIAGGI, New York
AUSTIN J. MURPHY, Pennsylvania
DALE E. KILDEE, Michigan
PAT WILLIAMS, Montana
MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ, California
MAJOR R. OWENS, New York
CHARLES A. HAYES, Illinois
CARL C. PERKINS, Kentucky
THOMAS C. SAWYER, Ohio
STEPHEN J. SOLARZ, New York
ROBERT E. WISE, Jr., West Virginia
TIMOTHY J. PENNY, Minnesota
BILL RICHARDSON, New Mexico
TOMMY F. ROBINSON, Arkansas
PETER J. VISCLOSKY, Indiana
CHESTER G. ATKINS, Massachusetts
JAMES JONTZ, Indiana

JAMES M. JEFFORDS, Vermont
WILLIAM F. GOODLING, Pennsylvania
E. THOMAS COLEMAN, Missouri
THOMAS E. PETRI, Wisconsin
MARGE ROUKEMA, New Jersey
STEVE GUNDERSON, Wisconsin
STEVE BARTLETT, Texas
THOMAS J. TAUKE, Iowa
RICHARD K. ARMEY, Texas
HARRIS W. FAWELL, Illinois
PAUL B. HENRY, Michigan
FRED GRANDY, Iowa
CASS BALLENGER, North Carolina

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ, California, *Chairman*

PAT WILLIAMS, Montana
CHARLES A. HAYES, Illinois
MAJOR R. OWENS, New York
CHESTER G. ATKINS, Massachusetts
JAMES JONTZ, Indiana
AUGUSTUS F. HAWKINS, California
(Ex Officio)

STEVE GUNDERSON, Wisconsin
PAUL B. HENRY, Michigan
FRED GRANDY, Iowa
JAMES M. JEFFORDS, Vermont
(Ex Officio)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held in Washington, DC, on May 18, 1988	1
Statement of:	
Francis, Yvette, member, New York City Volunteer Corps	34
Franklyn, David, director, Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio Conservation Corps	29
Johnson, Keith, member, Montgomery County Conservation Corps	39
McCracken, Larry Kenneth, chairman, Public Safety Committee, Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce	2
Pettit, J. Stephen, member of the board of directors, Montgomery County Conservation Corps	19
Plotkin, Henry, director, New Jersey Youth Corps	10
Workman, Bonnie, member, Montgomery County Conservation Corps	41
Prepared statements, letters, supplemental materials, et cetera:	
Francis, Yvette, graduate, New York City Volunteer Corps, prepared statement of	36
Franklyn, David, board member, National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, prepared statement of	32
Johnson, Keith, corpsmember, Montgomery County Conservation Corps, prepared statement of	40
McCracken, Larry Kenneth, Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, prepared statement of	6
Plotkin, Henry, director, New Jersey Youth Corps, prepared statement of.	14
Seiberling, Hon. John F., a former Member of Congress from the State of Ohio, prepared statement of	17
Workman, Bonnie, corpsmember, Montgomery County Conservation Corps, prepared statement of	42

AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 18, THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION CORPS ACT OF 1987

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 1988

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to recess, at 9:40 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Matthew G. Martinez (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Members present: Representatives Martinez, Hayes, Owens, Gunderson, and Henry.

Staff present: Eric Jensen, staff director; David Vaughn, staff counsel; Mary Gardner, and Beth Buehlmann.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I want to call the meeting to order and start out with my statement. I would also like to introduce Charlie Hayes, a member of the committee, who has joined us.

This is the second hearing of the Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities on combined Youth Service Corps legislation, H.R. 18, introduced by Mr. Udall, and H.R. 460, introduced by Mr. Panetta. H.R. 18 is a bill that has been passed by the House of Representatives twice and once has been passed by both Houses of Congress, and it was subsequently pocket vetoed by the President. To say that it is an idea whose time has come, is to understate the situation. It is now way overdue.

Although some Members of Congress are content with current programs that are underfunded and underpopulated, there are many more Members who realize that it takes more than a finger in the dike to stop the flow of discontent among our youth and a waste of vital energies and resources. With drug and gang crimes of epidemic proportions disturbing the tranquility of our inner-city neighborhoods to the extent that no one feels safe, it is time to provide alternatives to the youth of disadvantaged circumstances and an alternative to the negative actions of gang violence and drugs, and to provide for those who want and yearn for a better life, the opportunity to learn and earn and ultimately pull themselves out of the depths of despair and frustration.

There are young people nationwide who have a need to realize their worth to themselves and their communities. The proposed Youth Service Corps will provide a resource base to assist States and local communities meet conservation and human service needs which are currently being unmet. This program will tap the energies of youth, both poor and middle class, idealistic and street-wise,

to render services to their communities while attaining life experiences and life discipline.

A new addition to this combined bill includes a requirement that youth will receive education and career counseling while enrolled in service participation. This is followed up by a post-service GI bill that mandates either further academic or skills training benefits be provided to the corps participant.

The Youth Service Corps Program will be driven by an administration system responsive to local and community needs, as well as State priorities. The funding for the program will be matched 50–50 by local and private means. The overall attempt of the sponsors of these bills and amendments is to meet the community needs and the needs of our youth to serve their communities. We don't perceive of the program as displacing current workers, current youth programs, or other programs that are not reaching the majority of the youth in our Nation. I trust that this will be another valuable component in our overall effort to meet State and local service needs and to meet youth resource development needs.

With that, I would like to turn to Mr. Hayes and ask if he has an opening statement.

Mr. HAYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, but I have no statement. In the interest of time, I think we ought to get right into the witnesses.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Very good. With that, I would like to call the first panel of witnesses. The first panel consists of Mr. Larry McCracken, chairman of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Steve Pettit, board member of the Montgomery County Conservation Corps; and Mr. Henry Plotkin, director of the New Jersey Youth Conservation Corps.

Let me announce while you are being seated that your written statements in their entirety will be inserted in the record immediately following your oral presentations. If you wish to summarize, please do so. We will start with Mr. McCracken.

STATEMENT OF LARRY KENNETH McCRACKEN, CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE, SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. My name is Larry McCracken. I am here as chairman of the Public Safety Committee for the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and as immediate past president of the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps. Further, I am president of a human resources consulting company and a 13-year veteran police officer.

The Youth Service Corps concept, in its two major components, the American Conservation Service and the National Youth Service, truly does represent a major step forward for today's uneducated and unemployed youth. These programs will not only help fund much-needed conservation and social service programs; they will also provide many young people with their first real chance for meaningful employment. Young people throughout the country will have the opportunity to secure meaningful employment with no ex-

perience required, to further their educations, to learn important job skills, and to develop a sense of purpose in their lives.

Members of the Youth Service Corps will have an ever-compounding positive effect on our Nation. Further, they will develop skills, career skills, they will use throughout their lives, and employers later on will certainly receive the benefits of those experiences. They will work in our local communities, performing redevelopment and conservation projects which often would not be financially feasible.

Educationally, many of the corps members that come into this program will be extremely deficient. They will have dropped out of school or, if they do have a high school diploma, will not have the basic skills to enter in the job force. Some corps members, through this program, will end up leaving the program and going back into school to further their education.

The Sacramento Local Conservation Corps, which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, independent organization, has found through its entrance testing that fully 60 percent of our applicants are high school graduates; 40 percent have not completed high school. Of that 60 percent that do have high school diplomas, 80 percent of those read at a sixth grade level. Therefore, they are fully hampered in being able to apply for a job, being able to read equipment instructions, employment applications, or job tests.

Our Nation is going to benefit from this program through forest improvement, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, park and recreation development. Watershed protection through reforestation, flood reduction through stream clearance, overall environment enhancement, will be many of the benefits of this program.

Another tremendous asset and a very real asset, we realized, 2 years ago in Sacramento when we had terrible floods, was that we have an immediate base of trained volunteers or trained people that can be put into the breach. The Sacramento Local Conservation Corps and the California Conservation Corps were mightily responsible for saving many of the levees in the Sacramento delta during the 1986 floods. Further, they come back into the flooded area and the damaged area after the floods recede or after the damage has been wrought by a natural disaster and conduct the repair work, much of the cleanup work, as evidenced by the American River Parkway in Sacramento.

Many cities such as San Francisco, which is finding itself in substantial budget shortfalls right now, are finding that ancillary services to the elderly, to library systems, to other social needs, are being cut. They simply don't have the money. This kind of a program could refill many of those vacancies.

I was asked to address a couple of issues, one of those being a cost-benefit analysis of this kind of program. I am pleased to report that the most recent study of the California Conservation Corps shows that a return of $1.77 is normal for every dollar invested by the State into this kind of program—nearly 2 to 1. More dramatic, this figure jumps to $2.82 per dollar invested during a natural disaster. Long-term benefits, which I feel are sometimes more important, such as reduced welfare costs, reduced criminal activity and gang activity, increased tax revenues from a new type of taxpayer, and the development—most important—the development of an

entire new strata of semiskilled and skilled worker that does not exist in our country today, from this program.

Our area does have this kind of a need on a regular basis. The California Conservation Corps, by the way, has a regular backlog of 6 months to 2 years with the projects in any one of its centers. The Sacramento Local Corps, just operating within Sacramento County, has a regular 6-month backlog. Tremendous need does exist, as well, in our elderly care homes, our libraries, programs that deliver hot meals to the elderly that are shut-ins, and so forth. All of those needs exist throughout the county, I am sure throughout the country, and can be filled by this type of project.

Further, and something I haven't seen noted in this program, is that the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps operates an extensive recycling program of natural materials—cans, bottles, newspapers, and so forth—throughout the county and on city and county contract. That represents another major benefit to the community.

Our local community is certainly hampered—all of California is—by the Proposition 13 tax restrictions. Our communities are not able to raise the property taxes in order to meet their local needs, and so this kind of program is certainly of benefit there.

Youth gang activity, with which I am unfortunately very familiar in Sacramento, is totally out of hand. The California attorney general just last week estimated 100,000 gang members in the State of California currently today. That is an amazing number of young people involved in criminal activity, often before the age of 18. We have 8-year-old children on the street making $1,000 a week selling crack cocaine. These youth have no model in their life, quite often, no other choice to make. This program will give them a choice. It gives them a choice of self-esteem, of building a work ethic, of being what people really want to be. That is an extremely important point, I feel.

Certain corps members are going to enter this program, as I mentioned earlier, and return to school. We feel in the Sacramento Local Corps that is a very positive exit from our program. We don't see our program as any kind of a long-term employment position for these folks. It is merely a training vehicle to help them understand what a work ethic is—that you need to get up in the morning, you need to go to work, you need to respond to a supervisor, you need to do the job you are being paid to do, and you hopefully go home tired.

The Sacramento Local Corps I believe is a model for the type of program you are trying to build. Four days a week we work our people from 8 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock at night, pay them minimum wage, and they learn employable job skills—from masonry to painting to carpentry to the use of heavy equipment. The fifth day of the week we have a mandatory education component. They must, if they do not have a high school diploma, enter our high school equivalency program, the GED program. If they do have a high school diploma, they must enter college classes on the campus where we are housed, Fitzsimmons River College.

After their regular classes, they return to our classroom—and our classes, by the way, are taught by accredited high school teachers—they return to our classroom for instruction in how to build a resume, mock job interviews, what to wear to an interview, how to

read a newspaper and find a job. During the job working day, they have a break in the morning and in the afternoon, 10 minutes, and both of those breaks have to be spent in writing in a journal about what they are doing that day. It forces them to develop writing skills, in many cases just being able to read.

This program in Sacramento was developed by the Public Safety Committee of the Chamber of Commerce. The legislation was written by this organization and with the tremendous support of Senator John Garamendi, got through the California State Legislature. The California Conservation Corps provided much of the direction for us and our initial executive directors and staff.

The board of directors is made up of business people throughout Sacramento. On that board of directors is an interesting component, I feel, for you. We have representatives of all of the unions in Sacramento on our board of directors. We were very concerned by the displacement of union workers, as they were. They sit on our board meetings and all of our projects are okayed by the unions. We have never had a project turned down by the unions, by the way. When the city and the county propose a project for us, they contact the unions as well, get the okay, and we work in tandem.

Many of the technical supervisors on specific jobs, such as landscaping or levy enhancement, those positions are supervised by union supervisors. They come back and tell their employers, their regular employers, about the quality of our workers, and those people are hired quite often right off our job site because of the work ethic they have developed. It is a tremendous thing to see, to have an employer come onto the job site and say, "You guys are better than the people I can get on the street, and I would be happy to take five of you." It is a very positive separation, in our opinion.

Again, the long-term national effects of this kind of a program are going to include reduction of welfare demand. We are going to have less people on the welfare system, and we are talking about people who have never had a family member not be on welfare, have no family member that has ever gotten up and gone to work in the morning. There is no role model.

It will increase the taxpaying citizen base. We are going to have a whole group of people out there that have never paid taxes before, putting money back into the national coffers and State coffers; again, the development of a new semiskilled and skilled work force on a nationwide basis that does not exist today; and fewer individuals involved in drugs and other types of criminal activity because they are quite often too tired after they get home from work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Larry Kenneth McCracken follows:]

STATEMENT OF
LARRY KENNETH McCRACKEN
CHAIRMAN, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
CONCERNING AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 18,
THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION CORPS ACT OF 1987

MAY 18, 1988

Mr. Chairman, my name is Larry McCracken. I am here as the Chairman of the Public Safety Committee of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, and as immediate Past President of the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps. Further, I am President of a human resources consulting firm, and a reserve police officer with thirteen years experience.

I. General Comments

The Youth Service Corps, with it's two major components, the American Conservation Service and the National Youth Service, represents a major step forward for the future of our nation. These programs will not only help fund much needed conservation and social service programs, they will help provide many young Americans with their first real chance to become employed, productive citizens.

Young people throughout the country will have the opportunity to secure meaningful employment with no experience required, to further their educations, to learn important job skills, and develop a sense of purpose in their lives.

The members of the Youth Service Corps will have an ever-compounding positive effect in our communities, our civic organizations, and our natural resources. As youth pass through the program and go on to further their career goals, employers throughout the country will gain the benefit of their experience.

They will work in our local communities performing re-development and conservation projects which often would not be financially feasible otherwise. They will also provide a tremendous asset during and after natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes and forest fires.

Educationally, many of the corps members will be deficient, having dropped out of school prior to receiving their high school diploma. Mandatory educational components will not only provide basic educational skills, and high school equivalency diplomas for most, it will also reignite the desire to learn. Some corps members will return to complete their formal education.

The Sacramento Local Conservation Corps has found through entrance testing that while 60% of their applicants have high school diplomas, fully 80% of that group is reading at or below a sixth grade level. Future employment is further hampered, therefore, by a basic inability to read and understand equipment instructions, employment applications or job tests.

Our national parks, rivers and lakes will benefit as well through work in forest improvement, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, and park and recreation development. Watershed protection through reforestation, flood reduction through stream clearance, and overall environmental enhancement will all be direct benefits of these programs.

Another tremendous asset of these programs comes in the resource these corps members represent during natural disasters. The experiences of the California Conservation Corps and Sacramento Local Conservation Corps show that these groups are trained, available and ready to respond during disasters such as earthquakes, floods, forest fires and even epidemics. They also perform the needed repair work to natural resources areas following such disasters.

With many major cities, such as San Francisco, suffering substantial budget shortfalls, ancillary services are often the first to be cut. This program would fill many of the needs for services to the elderly, development of recycling programs, supplemental personnel to help run libraries, social service projects and more.

II. Specifically I wish to address the following questions:

1. Cost Benefit Analysis

   A. The most recent study of the California Conservation Corps estimates a return of $1.77 for every dollar invested by the State in the program.

   B. During natural disasters, this figure jumps to $2.82.

   C. Long-term benefits, such as reduced Welfare costs, reduced criminal activity, increased tax revenues and additional national productivity are nearly impossible to predict.

2. Our area's need for public services

   A. The California Conservation Corps estimates that it typically has from six months to two years worth of projects that are backlogged on a statewide basis.

   B. The Sacramento Local Conservation Corps normally maintains three to six months worth of backlogged project work, with substantially greater numbers available if manpower permitted.

   C. Tremendous needs exist throughout all communities in California for support of the elderly (delivering hot meals to shut-ins, etc.), for library systems suffering financial cutbacks, for community-based anti-drug programs (such as People Reaching Out, Sacramento, CA.), and for teacher-aide help in local schools.

   D. California is also experiencing a major growth in youth gangs and their involvement in marketing illegal drugs. corps members involved in community based activities like boys clubs, YMCA and others can make peer-group contact with these individuals possible. It is currently estimated by the California Attorney General that nearly 100,000 youth are involved in gage activities in this state.

   E. Community recycling programs are needed under current state law.

   F. The high school drop-out rate in California is currently in excess of 40%. Thus, thousands of young people are floating about in our society without even rudimentary educational skills with which to gain employment and create any kind of positive lifestyle.

3. Any inability your area has to provide these services:

   A. Conservation-oriented projects, such as park renovation, bike/hiking trail construction, disaster clean-up and others are nearly impossible to budget for local cities and counties following California's Proposition 13 tax restrictions.

   B. Community recycling programs are currently run by local corps, such as the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps.

   C. Very limited community service help is available through local corps, such as the San Francisco Local Conservation Corps and the East Bay Conservation Corps. Local volunteer groups also provide limited services to the elderly and invalid community.

D. Youth gang activity is totally out of control at this point, with violent crime and heavy drug trafficking a regular occurrence. Law enforcement agencies are stretched to their limits with reacting to the increased criminal activity, leaving little or no resources available for proactive interdiction of the young members.

E. Our school drop out rate cannot be affected by teachers and counsellors already overburdened by increased educational needs and decreasing revenues.

4. **Would this program help meet those needs?**

A. Definitely. This program offers funds at the local level to support organizations like the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps and the California Conservation Corps in their current efforts.

B. This program would provide funds to local communities to develop youth services to local elderly care facilities, libraries, homeless facilities and other social activities. Members would gain currently unavailable training which would open totally new career paths, re-establish education goals, and promote personal civic responsibility. All this among a population of which many have never known a working family member or role model.

C. Certain corps members will be young people who might otherwise end up in youth gangs and violent criminal activity. A positive alternative is often all a young person needs to be able to make the right choices in life.

5. **Would such a program be beneficial to youth?**

A. As stated throughout this testimony, this type of program would be extremely beneficial to youth today and for years to come.

We as a nation would benefit as these young people mature and are qualified and ready to assume their rightful place in our country's leadership. History has shown that many members of the 1930's era Civilian Conservation Corps went on the become successful, prominent citizens, contributing much to the country's development.

B. As a founding member and past president of a successful local conservation corps program, and as a reserve police officer with 12 years experience in street patrol, I can attest to the fact that money spent in this type of program is far more effective than money spent to prosecute and imprison the offender.

C. As the owner of an executive search and human resources consulting firm I see daily the need for well-developed work ethics, for a solid educational base, and for a mature sense of one's goals. Lifelong employment opportunities will become a reality to many through this program.

III. **The Sacramento Local Conservation Corps**

The SLCC program grew out of an organizational task force formed by the Public Safety Committee, Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, in 1984. Legislation for the State funding was authorized by Senator John Garamendi under Senate Bill 2094 in November, 1984. It is a register 501 C.3. non-profit independent organization.

Since January 1, 1985, the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps has employed 750 corps members and performed approximately 178,168 man hours of community service throughout Sacramento County. (The California Conservation Corps has trained over 37,000 people in it's eleven year history.)

The Corps is designed to assist unemployed youth, ages 18 to 23 years old, in developing a basic work ethic, employable job skills, and improving their educational foundation. Promised are "hard work, miserable condition, and low wages." Yet many young people strive to participate in a program that is often a totally knew way of life to them.

The SLCC is heavily involved in local project work, including the renovation of local parks and outdoor community areas, disbursement of free smoke detectors to the elderly or needy, clearing of clogged streams and floodways, and much more. During the 1986 flood disaster, the crews worked long hours shoring up levees in the river delta, then were heavily involved in reconstruction of the American River Parkway afterwards. Later they built new running/hiking paths on throughout the parkway system.

One day each week all corps members must attend educational classes geared toward their level of competency. Classes are held in the SLCC facility and taught by accredited teachers from a local school district. Further, they receive instruction in resume construction, job hunting and interviewing techniques. Anti-drug education is also a regular subject.

The Sacramento Local Conservation Corps has become a major community resource, lauded by city, county and state officials. It's members will continue to represent a community asset as they become employed, involved citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this committee on these important issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry K. McCracken
McCracken, Wilcox & Bertoux
601 University Avenue, Suite 236
Sacramento, California 95825
(916) 929-7723

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. McCracken. We have some questions but we will hold them until we hear the other witnesses.

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Certainly.

Mr. MARTINEZ. With that, we will go to Mr. Plotkin.

Let me first introduce Mr. Henry, who has joined us. Mr. Henry is a Representative from Michigan.

Mr. Plotkin?

STATEMENT OF HENRY PLOTKIN, DIRECTOR, NEW JERSEY YOUTH CORPS

Mr. PLOTKIN. Mr. Chairman, I am Henry Plotkin, administrator of the New Jersey Youth Corps. I work in New Jersey for the Department of Community Affairs, which the program is administered out of.

The New Jersey Youth Corps' purpose is to provide educational and career options for high school dropouts, ages 16 to 25. New Jersey, like most other States, has experienced an increase in the dropout population. Indeed, in some cities in New Jersey the dropout rate is over 50 percent, of those who begin high school.

The New Jersey Youth Corps is part of an emerging State policy that recognizes that most of these dropouts face a bleak future. Currently in New Jersey five out of six jobs require at least a high school diploma, and the trend line of that is increasing, where in a couple of years, in the early nineties, at least a couple of years of college will be a precondition for the vast majority of jobs.

The availability of jobs in the manufacturing sector, which created the opportunity for upward mobility enjoyed by previous generations, has sharply declined. Unless dropouts obtain basic literacy skills along with good work habits, they are unlikely to find productive employment in the service and high-tech oriented economy that has become New Jersey's and of course other States' as well.

In order to attack this problem, the now 3-year-old New Jersey Youth Corps was established and created a comprehensive 6-month program, with the option for 1 year where necessary, consisting of several interrelated components. Each Youth Corps participant receives the following: counseling, both personal and group; academic skills instruction, geared the GED mostly, although sometimes an adult high school diploma; employability skills training; career counseling; paid community service work; and ultimately placement. The range of placements include returns to school, usually a vocational school as opposed to the high school they dropped out of; a job with a career ladder; the military; college; JTPA or OJT—on-the-job—training programs.

It is important to note that the program is designed so that all the elements reinforce each other. Every part of the New Jersey Youth Corps exists under one roof. Nothing is subcontracted out, so that the teachers, the counselors, the employability skills teachers, are all hired by the program. At the heart of this attempt to achieve an organic unity is the community service project.

In order to teach the value of work concretely, each enrollee is assigned to a community service project for which he or she is paid a stipend of $3.35 an hour. The experiences that the enrollee has

on this supervised work site are integrated into the basic skills and personal and career counseling sessions. Not only do the enrollees learn the importance of developing good work habits, but because each project is community oriented, they also learn to feel they have contributed to the improvement of their community.

The Youth Corps seeks to instill the value of community service in order to give the enrollees the sense that they have a measure of control over the world they inhabit, and I just might add that the kinds of things kids in New Jersey have done—again, all dropouts, all fairly low literacy rates—have been things like rebuilding a gazebo in Patterson, rehabbing houses in Newark, working in Alzheimer's wards in New Brunswick, and in one of our newer programs in Camden, a fairly rundown housing project is being landscaped by enrollees. This summer we plan for them to rehab a laundromat in that housing project and then run it themselves as a small business.

The New Jersey Youth Corps structurally is administered on the local level by grantees who receive their grants through a competitive proposal review process. One thing that should be noted: Even though they are local grantees, the program they run is identical. It is a program designed at the state level, and when they apply to us for grants, they must implement the same program, so there are no real—aside from local conditions—differences in any of the grantees.

Currently there are 14 Youth Corps grantees who serve more than 1,200 high school dropouts throughout New Jersey. The existing grantees include adult learning centers, community-based organizations; the State medical school is a grantee; and a private employment consortium. Taken together, these grantees serve almost every major urban area in New Jersey. Significantly, and despite the diversity of staff from these agencies, they consult with each other on a regular basis, undergo common training, and the enrollees are encouraged to see themselves as part of a State-wide effort that transcends the boundaries of their local communities. Indeed, the Youth Corps program in New Jersey is part of a national service corps movement whose roots of course lie in the Civilian Conservation Corps movement of the 1930's.

Of all the varieties of service corps that exist nationally, New Jersey is among the most urban and probably the most specifically targeted. The young adults we serve, as I said before, are all dropouts. I know of no other program that just targets dropouts. The average age of an enrollee, even though we can serve up to age 25, is 18 years old. They read between a sixth and a seventh grade level, which is functionally illiterate; have low computational abilities; possess little self-confidence or self-esteem; and come to us with very little sense of what their options in life might be. It is a very narrow view of the world.

Additionally, many of our enrollees are parents themselves and many have been influenced by many of the temptations of the streets. In short, we have a population of corps members who have many significant emotional, economic, and academic barriers to overcome before they will be able to make reasonable life choices.

The major finding in all our studies of our own program tells us that the most important predictor of enrollee success is the dura-

tion and the quality of their community service enrollment—employment, excuse me. That is, irrespective of any other variable—reading level, previous work experience, family background, et cetera—corps members who have a successful time in their community service work will do well in all other components of the program. It is for this reason that I am here to support legislation that will establish a National Youth Service Corps.

I am particularly pleased that this bill recognizes the contribution made by State efforts in this area and seeks to add badly needed Federal funds to those efforts. Given the scarce resources of the States, I think it was wise of New Jersey to target the population with the greatest need. However, the potential of this bill would be to significantly broaden the population base of the New Jersey Youth Corps. Indeed, one of the great benefits of an expanded National Service Corps effort is that it would allow young adults from different social classes, races, and localities to have the common experience of working for their country in some meaningful way. Central to the task of a National Service Corps is to instill the value of community service work, in order to give corps members the sense of control over their lives, as I said before.

I want to make one final set of comments about why I think this bill is important and why I think any bill we construct—and I think this one makes giant steps in this direction—has to look to the population that the New Jersey Youth Corps serves. For urban high school dropouts, a service corps has the potential of providing a legitimate, realistic second chance to get back into the system. Too often the talents of urban youth have no legitimate arena to express themselves. Young adults in the city tend to be isolated from the mainstream of American society. While they may be street-wise, they know little about the rest of the country.

Just one small example: We took six or seven corps a year ago in the spring down to Asbury Park to do a statewide community service project, which was to paint park benches on the boardwalk in Asbury Park. Eighty percent—we did a poll on this one—of those young people, all New Jersey residents, had never seen the Jersey shore before. They had never been to the beach. They knew little about that part of the world. Their image of success—and the previous speaker I think said it quite well—is drawn from negative role models in their community or from what they see on television, and I am not sure that J.R. Ewing is the answer to an ambitious young person.

Among the promises, then, of this bill would be to provide this population with an opportunity to work with other young adults in community service projects. For many who now languish on the streets of this Nation's cities, unsure about what to do with their lives, a National Service Corps would provide a way out. Just as for many of these young people dropping out of school becomes a ritual to adulthood for them—that time in the street is important—I would like to see us construct a world where being in the National Service Corps is in fact their ritual to adulthood, that passing time in their lives.

I would also add—and this is my final comment— that I think this corps would equally benefit, although it is not as apparent, I suppose, middle class and upper middle class young people. Too

many from this population, I think, are pressured to make early career decisions and the National Service Corps would give them time to decide what they want to do with their lives but, really much more important than that, decide who they are as people.

Before I took this job, I taught for 11 years at a university in New Jersey, and I saw a trend developing. People felt at earlier and earlier stages of their lives they had to make career choices, so we had freshmen coming in convinced that if they didn't become a CPA, their lives were doomed. I think that is a mistake. I think what needs to happen is, we need to give people a breathing space to feel who they are, and I can think of no better way than working for your country to realize who you are and what you want to do with your life, because the kind of person you are at 17, as we all know, is not the kind of person you will be at 19, so I think a service corps would help.

Again I want to underline one point I made: What makes this bill a useful and important contribution is the potential of having the kids I serve exclusively, who I like to work with in my program, be much better served if we could integrate those kids with middle or upper middle class kids. So I think it is socially important and I think it is economically important that we begin to refocus our attention away from simply job training programs, and see national service not simply as job training but rather as something to give young people a chance to work together for good public policy goals.

I thank you.

[The prepared statement of Henry Plotkin follows:]

87-857 0 - 88 - 2

STATEMENT OF HENRY PLOTKIN

DIRECTOR, NEW JERSEY YOUTH CORPS

before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES of the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

May 18, 1988

Mr. Chairman, I am Henry Plotkin, Administrator of the New Jersey Youth Corps. The New Jersey Youth Corps is a three year old state funded program that targets high school dropouts throughout New Jersey. We currently have fourteen grantees, each of whom is responsible for implementing a six month work/study Youth Corps model developed at the state-level. By this July we hope to have nineteen programs in New Jersey that will serve every city with a high dropout rate.

The New Jersey Youth Corps was conceived at the time when CETA was being replaced by JTPA and there was a calculation made that the limited literacy and lack of work experience of dropouts would prevent them from fully participating in many job training programs. For these young adults a special and more systematic effort was required. To meet their needs the New Jersey Youth Corps provides intensive basic skills instruction, counseling, employability skills training and, most critically, community service work (for which they receive $3.35 per hour). We also place each "graduate" and do follow-up for ninety days. All the services provided by the program are housed in a single site and the approach of all our grantees is holistic.

Of all the variety of service corps that exist nationally, New Jersey's is among the most urban and probably the most specifically targeted. The young adults we serve have an average age of 18 (we can enroll individuals ages 16-25), read at between a sixth and seventh grade level, have low computational abilities, possess little self-confidence and come to us with very little sense about career options. Additionally, many of our enrollees are parents and many have been influenced by many of the temptations of the streets. In short, we have a population of corpsmembers who have many significant emotional, economic and academic barriers to overcome before they will be able to make reasonable life choices.

The major empirical findings we have developed tell us that the most important predictor of enrollee success is the duration and the quality of their community service employment. That is, irrespective of any other variable, e.g. reading level, work experience, family background etc., corpsmembers who have a successful time in their community service work will do well in all other components of the program. It is for this reason, I am here to support legislation that will establish a national "Youth Service Corps." I am particularly pleased that this bill recognizes the contribution made by many state efforts in this area and seeks to add badly needed federal funds to these efforts.

Given the scarce resources of the states, I think it was wise of New Jersey to target the population with the greatest need. However, the potential of this bill would be to significantly broaden the population base of the New Jersey Youth Corps. Indeed, one of the great benefits of an expanded national service corps effort is that it will allow young adults from different social classes, races and localities to have the common experience of working for their country in some meaningful way. Central to the task of a national service corps is to instill the value of community service in order to give each corpsmember the sense that they have a measure of control over their environment and consequently of their lives.

In my opinion this is more easily accomplished in a program that reflects the general population and not just one targeted group. Hence, I believe a nationally endorsed and promoted service corps which called on the talents of young adults from all segments of American society to work together to solve common problems is clearly in the national interest.

There is another equally compelling set of reasons why I support legislation establishing a national service corps. New Jersey like many other states is experiencing a labor shortage. While I understand this is not true for all states, current estimates are that New Jersey will have 2,000,000 job openings over the next decade and 600,000 of these will be new positions. A recent employment report to Governor Kean stated that "...the future challenge to New Jersey and its employers won't be job creation, but finding enough of the right people to fill the job openings that exist." To the extent that service corps teach good work habits and basic literacy, they will contribute not only to the economic opportunities of corpsmembers, but to the increased economic productivity of the nation.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Plotkin.

We are going to have to adjourn for a short while for a vote. There is a journal vote, but let me introduce Steve Gunderson, the ranking minority member of the committee, who just came in. I would ask him if he had a statement, but I think he has been making it to the minority staff director, so we don't need to hear from him.

But at this time let me introduce a piece of testimony before we leave, without objection, from John Seiberling that is written to us.

Mr. GUNDERSON. If it is a nice statement, there is no objection. [Laughter.]

Mr. MARTINEZ. It is a very nice statement, very complimentary to you, Mr. Gunderson, so it is entered into the record in its entirety.

[The prepared statement of Hon. John F. Seiberling follows:]

HEARING ON H.R. 18, THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION CORPS ACT

May 18, 1988

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

STATEMENT OF JOHN F. SEIBERLING

I am pleased to submit this statement to you in strong support of the American Conservation Corps Act and to urge your prompt action on the bill, now H.R. 18, the American Conservation Corps Act of 1987. As you know, I sponsored a similar bill in the House in the past three Congresses. I believe strongly in the benefits a program like this will provide, both to our resources and our young people. I understand that a combined conservation corps and human service bill is now being offered as an amendment to H.R. 18. The amendment does not change the core elements of the ACC bill, strengthens the education benefits for young participants, and also provides assistance to corps that do human service work.

During the 97th and 98th Congress, the House Interior Subcommittee on Public Lands, which I chaired, held extensive hearings on previous youth conservation work programs as well as on the American Conservation Corps bill itself. During those hearings we heard from many young people who have participated in various corps programs across the country and from their elders who participated in the original CCC program in the 1930s. All attested, sometimes in very moving and compelling terms, to the value the programs had for them and for their lives. This bill would establish a relatively modest program to provide well over 100,000 young people with conservation and human service jobs. It would provide a "federal partner" to the 53 existing state and local conservation and service corps programs that now struggle to stay alive, and would help spawn many new ones.

This bill would become the only direct federal soruce of aid for programs that combine both full-time paid employment with an opportunity for education and on-the-job training. It provides young people with opportunities to learn a work ethic and to feel needed by their communities and their nation, and it addresses the serious and chronic problem of youth unemployment.

I am sure you are familiar with a report recently published by the William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship. That report, "The Forgotten Half: Non-College Bound Youth in America," called our attention to the approximately 20 million 16-24 year-olds who are not likely to go to college. Those young people suffer from a steadily declining ability to find good jobs. In fact, according to the Commission, in 1986 young males ages 20-24 who had high school diplomas earned 28% less in constant dollars than the comparable group of youths in 1973. The income drop was 20% for white and 44% for black youth. In the report, the Commission calls for the development of more youth corps programs. Other studies indicate that for the millions of youth who do not even have a high school diploma, the earnings picture is even grimmer, as I am sure members of this committee are well aware.

When I sponsored the American Conservation Corps Bill in the 99th Congress, I requested two studies from the Library of Congress on the cost benefits of youth corps programs. One of those reports included documentation from the General Accounting Office that showed "many federal facilities did not meet health and safety standards and [estimated] that $1.6 billion was needed to correct these deficiencies."

On Sunday, May 1, 1988, The New York Times published an article about a new General Accounting Office survey that reported national park managers estimated an unmet need of $1.9 billion for maintenance and capital improvement in fiscal year 1987. Clearly, the need is even greater today than it was in 1985. If the American Conservation Corps Act had been passed earlier, we would already have substantial numbers of young people addressing the problems of our deteriorating parks and natural resources. With this amendment, we would also have young people helping meet our needs for human services as well.

The 53 state and local conservation and service corps programs that currently operate have strong bi-partisan support and are in touch with local needs. This bill deserves the same bi-partisan support. We need to recognize the contribution our young people can make and the importance of providing them with opportunities to be recognized as the vast, untapped resource they are. I urge your subcommittee to provide that recognition and renew our commitment to young people and our natural and human resources.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Let me ask Mr. Pettit to bear with us. We will take the shortest recess we can and get back as soon as we can from this vote. Then we will take your testimony. We are adjourned for just a minute.

[Recess taken.]

Mr. MARTINEZ. I will call the meeting back to order. With that, the two most important members of the committee are here, so we will proceed with Mr. Pettit.

STATEMENT OF J. STEPHEN PETTIT, MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MONTGOMERY COUNTY CONSERVATION CORPS

Mr. PETTIT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Steve Pettit and I am a member of the board of directors for the Montgomery County Conservation Corps. I speak to you today on behalf of the corps. I have been a board member since its inception in 1984.

This program provides work and training for unemployed, disadvantaged youth at the same time it improves and preserves the environment. The unemployed youth get on-the-job training as well as vocational instruction. We also provide counseling to help determine and carry out their goals. The Conservation Corps was originally administered by the Department of Family Resources and funded by the county under an annual budget of $220,000. We are now administered through our local community college as an annual budget of $452,000. We feel that with the college administering this program, it has better benefited our youth.

In 1987 we tried to set up a Human Service Corps and administer it the same way we do our Conservation Corps, whereas our county council supported the development of the Human Service Corps but could not allot the funds because the county budget was already overrun. Now we believe there is a national trend for the youth service program that combines conservation and community service to preserve the environment, enhance and improve the community, and provide educational and employment opportunities for young people.

I am a builder and developer in Montgomery County. My firm has worked in harmony with the Conservation Corps, and this harmony has benefited not only my company but also the people in the county. Therefore, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, we strongly urge that you pass this amendment to H.R. 18. Thank you.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Pettit.

Let me start the questioning with Mr. McCracken. One of the things in which I am interested is how a police officer views this legislation. As a police officer, you are very acquainted with the juvenile gang activity that takes place in our inner cities. A lot of that activity really is going on because there is no alternative for these young people. A lot of times through juvenile diversion programs these young people are diverted into something that shows them their worth and makes them realize they can be productive and contributing citizens. This pretty much changes their attitude and their ways and it saves a lot of them.

It is not going to save everybody. There are some hard-core bad seeds with which you just can't do anything. But there are so many

who need help. Many of the young people who have testified before us had previously been involved with things with which they shouldn't have been involved. They were involved not so much because it didn't bother their conscience but because they really had nothing else to do, and the peer pressure just dragged them into that kind of activity.

One of the things that you talked about in your testimony was the long-term benefits, such as reduced welfare cost. I want you to do two things: one, expand on how, for the record, they came to the conclusion in that study that for every dollar spent, there was a return of $1.77 and how during disasters it jumps to $2.82. I can understand the higher return during disasters because when there is a disaster, such as the floods you described, these people are pressed into service, and believe me, they do a tremendous service.

I know, because in the city of Monterey Park, when I was the mayor there we had floods that actually washed away homes. There were other homes that would have been lost had it not been for the Conservation Corps coming in and sandbagging the hills and slopes, and making sure the water was diverted in another direction. They actually saved homes, and if you think in terms of the cost of replacing a destroyed home, that return must have exceeded even that $2.82. I want you to elaborate a little bit on the cost-benefit, how you arrive at that set amount.

The other thing I want you to discuss is another cost savings that you didn't touch on; the cost of incarcerating people who are not given alternatives and who end up in the juvenile court system and, ultimately, incarcerated. Would you do that?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Mr. Martinez, I am going to have to say that I don't have exact figures to be able to give you. The $1.77 figure came from Mr. Bud Scheble, the director of the California Conservation Corps. I contacted him just prior to coming to Washington, and those were figures that he gave to me.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Generally, were those figures derived from the savings of welfare, unpaid welfare?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. I think that those figures came from the working ability of the individuals that have been put on these projects, the projects that were completed, and——

Mr. MARTINEZ. Just what they produced on the project?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Well, if you take a look at like the cost of repairing levees or the ability to fight forest fires and the cost of hiring crew members, crew fire fighters at $20 some an hour, when you can put in a team of skilled California Conservation Corps people, and they did work extensively last year on our forest fires, it is a substantially lower cost, obviously.

Mr. MARTINEZ. So then essentially that is just the cost of the actual activity. That doesn't include the cost savings from those people that diverted from a life of welfare, second and third and fourth generation?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Those are not figured into that figure whatsoever.

Mr. MARTINEZ. That is not even figured in there?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. That is over and above.

Mr. MARTINEZ. So even the cost of incarceration, had these kids not been saved and gone on to a life that would have led them to incarceration, it doesn't even——

Mr. MCCRACKEN. These are hard production figures. They have nothing to do with the long-term benefit.

Mr. MARTINEZ. If you added in all of the other long-term benefits, it would be substantially more?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. It would be substantially greater than that, sir.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you. Now you have touched on something that provokes another question, the fact that you use the Conservation Corps rather than hire experienced fire fighters at $20 an hour. One of the things that has been evident to me from all of the testimony I have heard from people who have the Conservation Corps experiences or the Job Corps experiences in cities like New York, is that they don't replace public employees. One of the greatest concerns to many of us is whether this program is going to replace public employees specifically and even employees who are legitimately professional or craftsmen. Are we going to be replacing these people? Are they going to be losing jobs? That is a concern, but I don't think that it is going to happen. In the experiences that we have seen, the kinds of work that these young people do when they are pressed into service in a case of emergency does not take away employment from those people.

Mr. MCCRACKEN. I feel that is a very good question, sir. Let me address the displacement first. As I mentioned, we have representatives of the trade unions on our board of directors. They are there specifically so that we make sure and not displace union workers. We are talking about people that don't have any job skills whatsoever. They can't replace public people because they don't know how to get up and go to work in the morning. They have no job skills at all when they enter our programs.

We teach them the basic work ethic. We teach them, "This is a shovel and this is what we do with this shovel." Eventually, "This is a chain saw," "This is a piece of materials handling equipment," "This is a bulldozer," and it goes on from there. They are then trained to become productive workers for city programs or construction companies, builder-developers, painting contractors, masonry firms, those kinds of things, and they are hired away by those companies to become productive workers and very often union members.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Does gaining the experience give them the work ethic?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Precisely. We are talking about developing an entire new strata of employees that are today languishing on the streets of our cities. Los Angeles, as you are very aware, has a tremendous runaway problem. You can drive down the streets of L.A. or Hollywood and find kids sleeping in doorways. They are there. Where else are they going to go in life?

They can walk into one of our programs, join this program. If it is California Conservation Corps, they can live in the program. With us, they live at home and come in each day. It is a tremendous asset to the community. It takes people off the street literally, teaches them employable job skills, gives them back their self-

esteem, their dignity, and allows them to become productive citizens in this country.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Plotkin, you mentioned that there are union members on your board of directors?

Mr. PLOTKIN. No, I did not, sir.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Was it you, Larry?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Yes, sir, I did.

Mr. MARTINEZ. So the unions are in concert with this whole concept?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Absolutely. Recently we got a major contract from the city of Sacramento, and the city manager is with us on this trip, with the chamber of commerce. We had breakfast, and he mentioned the fact that before we got that contract he called the trade unions and said, "Is it okay for us to give this to the local conservation corps? We only have so many dollars and we have this much work." The trades said, "Absolutely. There is no way we can go to work and do that job for you with that amount of money."

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you.

Mr. Plotkin, in your experience, because you are actually part of a program, has there been union opposition to the kinds of work that these young people are doing?

Mr. PLOTKIN. No, quite the opposite, there has been union support. We have had very good union support. We have had union members supervise young people on work sites. We in no example I know of have ever competed with any union jobs or any public employee or private employee jobs. The kinds of jobs our kids do would be things that would not have gotten done without the Youth Corps.

Mr. MARTINEZ. The drop-out rate is one of the things that really disturbs many of us, especially those of us who come from minority communities or low socio-economic communities where there are a lot of disadvantaged youth.

Our concern about the dropout rate is that it is tremendously high. You mentioned 40 percent. In some of my district's areas it is as high as 75 percent, and in some of Charlie Hayes' it is as high as 75 percent. Charlie Hayes introduced a bill which is now a part of H.R. 5 which was signed by the President, which has a dropout prevention program in it, but in and of itself it is not going to completely do the job. It will help, and we need help everywhere we can get it.

In that regard, many times a young person really doesn't realize the relationship between education and work until he goes to work, if he is lucky enough to get a job, and some of them never do. Some of them who are lucky enough to get a job that provides for their needs, become satisfied with where they are and have no further ambition. Some of them in that situation find they do have ambition but find that they are locked into a job and maybe even starting a family. There is no way for them to go back to school and get the education they need to achieve their amibition, so I think that is an important component.

Would you elaborate a little bit on the experiences of those young people that you have seen come through your program. Did

they learn to understand the relationship between education and work, and then back to school? Has it helped them immeasurably?

Mr. PLOTKIN. Let me just take one step back from your question and talk about the dropout issue, about why students drop out. I think there are some real misconceptions out there about why they drop out. The varieties are as vast as the kids themselves.

Many drop out because they are afraid of the drug addicts in the schools. Some drop out because they have children themselves. Some drop out because they have no homes to live in or because the family situation is very difficult. It is a very complex set of reasons, why people drop out, and among the problems I think is, urban schools still need to adapt themselves more to the needs of the young people we serve.

But in terms of what happens to them after they drop out, again, we probably mandate as many hours of education as any other program in the Nation. The average Youth Corps participant is in class for 15 to 20 hours a week, and then the other half of their day they spend on community service work, so there is a lot of education. What we have seen happen is, we can move somebody who comes in at a sixth or seventh grade level, and if they stick with us, we can raise them to a 10th or 11th grade level in 5 or 6 months, which is enough to pass the GED test.

At that point what we do is, we highly recommend, for those who can afford it and want it or we can get money for, that they go on to college. As I speak to you today, there are scores of young people who half a year ago were dropouts, who are now in fact enrolled in college—usually county colleges, but in a couple of cases in 4-year colleges as well. We find again, once the pump is primed, the academic pump is primed and they feel they can succeed academically, they want to go on. We recommend that because the nature of Jersey's economy is such that the semiskilled route to mobility isn't really there the way it is in other kinds of States.

On the other hand, let me make one other point, and I think it is very important: that in some sense what I think we need to do is to tie in service corps programs, urban ones, with other things in the city. The one thing I think we have all learned about the economy of cities is that when you do downtown development programs, those are good things and they help downtown development, but the tendency is, they don't spill over into the neighborhoods.

So one of the things that I would like to do, and I am certainly going to work with my program in doing, is involve our programs in helping to rebuild neighborhood economies. I mentioned earlier the laundromat in Camden that we are going to help rebuild. We have a vendor coming in. We are going to work at that. I am very interested in tying us in much more directly with economic community development projects, where our kids can begin to work for those projects; after they get the right motivational things behind them, to then develop skills that can lead to real jobs.

For instance, there are lots of jobs in weatherization in inner cities. There are lots of jobs, still, in housing rehabilitation. Now I think there could be a whole area of economic opportunity that could be really quite compelling for these kids, so again I think that whether it is this bill or another version of this bill, it seems to me what we ought to encourage very much is the linking up of

this kind of program with economic development efforts and tie our kids directly into those. They could be preapprenticeship programs or apprenticeship programs. There are a wide variety of ways of doing it, but in a program with a purpose where they can begin to see what they are doing changing the world they live in, that is a real hope.

One final comment about that: It is likely for many of these young people, they are not going to leave the city. The price of housing and other kinds of issues makes that leap out of the city very difficult for most of them. Some, of course, will do quite well and leave the city, but if they are going to stay in the city, it seems to me they ought to be tied into those programs that we have right now that will make the cities better, and learn jobs through those programs.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I think you are absolutely right. One of the things that concerns everybody is whether we are making programs that make work or are we making programs that are going to provide experience that will eventually lead to long-term employment? Mr. McCracken alluded to the fact that this may not be a career job, but it certainly is giving them the work ethic, the enthusiasm and the self-confidence that they need to go on to find a career and make a career of something.

I want to ask a question of all of you, and maybe you can think about it while I am gone for this vote and come right back. It is one that I think is going to be asked as this thing proceeds: Are the States going to then take these Federal moneys and use them, rather than State moneys, or are they going to use the Federal moneys to supplement or expand the programs? I think that is something that really is very important. We need to feel that the need to expand these programs is so great that the Federal dollars would be used to expand rather than just to replace the local dollars.

I will be back in 5 minutes or so. Thank you.

[Recess taken.]

Mr. MARTINEZ. We are now reconvened. Let me start with my last question first, and you have had some time to think about it, so let's start with Mr. McCracken.

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Mr. Chairman, we feel that the States certainly should not use these monies to supplant current programs, but rather to develop new programs and expand current programs like the California Conservation Corps. All of the programs within the United States at this point currently only meet a fraction of the need of today's youth. There is a definite expansion need in every single State, and we really feel that States that have the welfare of youth in mind are going to be expanding their programs rather than supplanting them with these funds.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. McCracken.

Mr. Plotkin?

Mr. PLOTKIN. I agree. States should not be allowed to do that. The language of the legislation talks about enhancing existing programs, and I think when the administrative rules for this are written, should it pass, there ought to be fairly strict standards to make sure that doesn't happen. I know in New Jersey I would not think it would happen, since they have been adding State moneys

to the program over the last couple of years because they realize that we are only touching a fraction of the young people who need us.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you.

Mr. Pettit, your particular county actually expends quite a bit of money already in this area.

Mr. PETTIT. Yes, we do.

Mr. MARTINEZ. And in addition to the question I asked, I would like to know what percentage of the eligible or needy population you are now serving with your current efforts?

Mr. PETTIT. I can't answer that now right off the top. I would say probably about maybe 10 percent.

Mr. MARTINEZ. So it is a very small percentage, so any new Federal moneys you receive—the program is a 50–50 grant anyway——

Mr. PETTIT. Right.

Mr. MARTINEZ [continuing]. But any new moneys you would receive would be a welcome addition to what you are doing already.

Mr. PETTIT. Yes. Yes, it would be.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Do you have anything else?

Mr. PETTIT. Well, as I mentioned before, we tried to put the Youth Corps in with our corps but they would not let us do that. They were talking or our county council was talking that maybe next year they would allot us money; to get our program set up and present it to them again next year, and they would allot money for human services, too, also money for the poor.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Would each of you say that on a local level many jurisdictions have already realized the benefits from this and the terrible need for it?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Absolutely. Mr. Chairman, in Sacramento alone, with the very small Sacramento Local Conservation Corps which only has 50 active corps members at any given time, and we operate on about a $600,000 total budget, we have had 790 young people through that program as of today; 192 of those were positive separations—either went to other companies and entered the work force, or went back to school on a full-time basis. Obviously that is a very, very small number. We need 10 times that ability to operate, and with that very small bit of availability of personnel we have completed 178,000 man-hours of work for Sacramento County alone.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I think that is a tremendous statistic. Those 192 successfully separated individuals are going to positively affect, in every way, shape or form, themselves and everybody, with whom they come in contact. I think it has greater ramifications than just the individual itself.

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Mr. Chairman, if I can make one other comment, in today's issue of "Insight" magazine from the Washington Post there is a very pertinent article entitled, "Even the most basic jobs now require basic skills." If I might, I would like to read two small paragraphs.

According to the Department, about 21 million U.S. adults are functionally illiterate. They cannot either read, write, or do simple arithmetic, or they may be unable to perform these skills adequately in the work place. Many job applicants today do not know the value of getting to work on time, how to follow instructions, or even how to learn. It is estimated that only 60 percent of whites, 14 percent of blacks,

graduate from high school with the basic skills the Armed Forces need to be eligible for training.

We are talking about infantrymen that can't read a basic instruction and don't qualify to join the military, even.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Well many of them actually do qualify to join the military simply because they have a high school diploma. But they have been through a system that hasn't really provided them with those tools they need to extend their abilities in any way.

Mr. MCCRACKEN. In our local area, fully 40 percent of the applicants to the Sacramento Corps do not have a high school diploma. Again, of those 60 percent that do have a diploma, 80 percent read at a sixth grade level.

Mr. MARTINEZ. You know, the Army expended I don't know how many millions last year bringing their recruits, who are all high school graduates, up to a ninth grade reading level, and they were happy to even get them that far. Mr. Plotkin, would you like to add anything?

Mr. PLOTKIN. No, I just agree in terms of our experience. We are not affecting nearly the percentage we should in terms of the amount of dropouts every year, but I also want to just underline the other point that I omitted in my prepared comments. That is that in New Jersey—and again we are in a very unique situation because of circumstances economically—we expect to have 2 million job openings in New Jersey through the mid-nineties, 600 of which are brand-new jobs. There is a real question, as we look at the population curve, whether there will be enough people to fill those jobs. In a recent report to the Governor there were many questions raised about whether we had the ability right now to train the people to fill those job spots, so I think the need is simply out there.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Plotkin.

Mr. Pettit?

Mr. PETTIT. No, I have no comment.

Mr. MARTINEZ. All right, then. Let me ask Mr. Hayes if he has any questions.

Mr. HAYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me see if I understand you correctly, each of your respective spheres of operation, in terms of your current funding method.

You, Mr. McCracken, as I understood it, your Sacramento program is funded by the State of California, right?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Three-quarters funded by the State of California with a 25 percent requirement for paid jobs that we work within the other parts of the community, such as park districts, city government, county government, that kind of thing. All the jobs must meet, of course, the public resources code; no work on private property.

Mr. HAYES. The total limit, dollar limit, I think you said, was $600,000. Is that right?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Yes, sir, between $600,000 and $650,000. That is the way we are currently funded.

Mr. HAYES. Yes, and I understood you to say, Mr. Plotkin, that your main area of operation is among high school dropouts. Is that right?

Mr. PLOTKIN. Exclusively.

Mr. HAYES. And your funding comes from the State of New Jersey?

Mr. PLOTKIN. All State monies.

Mr. HAYES. Yes, and yours, Mr. Pettit, comes from Montgomery County in Maryland, right?

Mr. PETTIT. Yes, the county government.

Mr. HAYES. What is the dollar amount of your program?

Mr. PETTIT. It is $453,000.

Mr. HAYES. Some $400,000?

Mr. PETTIT. Well, $452,000.

Mr. HAYES. The program that you are already operating obviously is doing some good, from what I can read from your testimony and in your expressions here. What is the level of unemployment in your respective areas, of the ages which you serve? What is the level of unemployment, roughly, in percentages?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. That is relatively difficult to state because we have a tremendous recent influx of Asians, we have a very strong Hispanic community and a Black community, and each one of those has different demographics. I daresay in certain areas, especially the blacks, that we are looking at about 45 percent unemployment in youth of 16 to 23 years old.

Mr. HAYES. You answered part of my next question: What percentage of the numbers are minorities?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Well, we divide the minorities, male and female—18 percent female, the rest male. Of that, about——

Mr. HAYES. I am primarily interested in Blacks and Hispanics.

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Yes, sir. About 42 percent are Blacks, about 28 percent are Hispanics. The balance, we have about an 8 percent white component and the rest are Asians.

Mr. HAYES. Yes.

Mr. Plotkin?

Mr. PLOTKIN. New Jersey is interesting, again. It is close to being a full employment State, as close as you are going to get, with the exception of inner city youth. In the inner city, the unemployment rate can be anywhere from 30 to 50 percent and the numbers are very, very difficult to calculate, but among the age cohort we serve it is very, very high.

Mr. PETTIT. Our unemployment rate is relatively low in Montgomery County, as it is anyhow, and the percentage to—I guess what I am trying to say is, the percentage is not really relative to where we get our classes of people that come to our corps. It is usually from the lower class areas within the county.

Mr. HAYES. Economically disadvantaged?

Mr. PETTIT. Right, economically disadvantaged.

Mr. HAYES. All right. You obviously recognize the inadequacies of your current program. For that reason, you see a need for a Federal movement in the area that is being proposed in the two pieces of legislation that we are discussing here.

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAYES. All three of you supported this legislation, right? All right. You mentioned, Mr. Plotkin, I think, some similarities between your program and the old federally funded Civilian Conservation Corps CCC during the Roosevelt era.

Mr. PLOTKIN. Yes, sir.

Mr. HAYES. You are looking at a person who was a recipient and a benefactor of the CCC. Now obviously I am interested, given my background before coming to Congress. You pay people. All of you pay these young men and women, right?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Yes.

Mr. HAYES. At what wage levels?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. In Sacramento we pay minimum wage, $3.35 an hour.

Mr. HAYES. You pay $3.35. What about New Jersey?

Mr. PLOTKIN. We pay $3.35 an hour.

Mr. HAYES. Are you opposed to raising the minimum wage?

Mr. PLOTKIN. In terms of the Youth Corps program or as Federal policy? In the Youth Corps program I have gotten unending pressure from my grantees to raise it, and I am about to collapse on the issue and raise it, because—it is an interesting situation.

Mr. HAYES. Oh, you are about to support it, right?

Mr. PLOTKIN. I am about to have no choice but have to raise it somewhat.

Mr. HAYES. Tell them to keep the pressure on, will you?

Mr. PLOTKIN. If somebody can go out and go to Wendy's and make $4.50 or $5 an hour, it's hard to get them for $3.35.

Mr. HAYES. That's right.

Mr. PLOTKIN. In Atlantic City it is even more complicated because of the casinos.

Mr. HAYES. You being a member of the chamber of commerce, I imagine you swallow pretty hard, too, don't you?

Mr. MCCRACKEN. Sir, I am also an independent businessman. I own my own firm, and I agree 100 percent that people cannot survive in today's society at $3.35 an hour.

Mr. HAYES. That's good.

Mr. PETTIT. We give $3.75.

Mr. HAYES. You are currently paying $3.75?

Mr. PETTIT. Yes.

Mr. HAYES. Okay. You don't mind heisting it up a little bit, do you?

Mr. PETTIT. It's the same way, like he was saying. If people complain to you, you know——

Mr. HAYES. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Hayes.

One last question: I don't know if any of the group here has or any of the people with whom you are involved have done an assessment of the needs, unmet needs in the community. Do you have any idea? Has anybody thought about all those unmet needs?

Mr. PLOTKIN. You mean the work needs?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Yes.

Mr. PLOTKIN. Yes. Well, I have, a lot, not in any systematic way, but when I drive through the cities of New Jersey there are just many unmet needs. It is everything from day care centers needing tire playgrounds to places needing painting to weatherization issues, so if the larger question about a national service corps is, "Is there work in America that needs to be done?" It seems to me the answer is overwhelmingly yes, and productive work, not just hanging around a park with a broom—real work.

Mr. McCracken. Exactly. The Sacramento Local Corps is not—and we adamantly say is not—a leaf-raking, make-work program. We do productive work that the community could not have done in any other form.

Mr. Martinez. I think that last statement is the most important one. Would you repeat that again?

Mr. McCracken. The program is not a leaf-raking, make-work program. We do productive work throughout the community and are considered a major community resource by our county and city governments.

Mr. Martinez. Thank you.

Mr. Pettit?

Mr. Pettit. We are basically the same way. We deal with the Chesapeake Bay Initiatives and incentives——

Mr. Martinez. Things that would not be met otherwise?

Mr. Pettit. Right, would not be done by anybody else.

Mr. Martinez. Thank you very much. I want to thank you all for appearing before us and giving us your expert testimony. It is very important to us and it is very helpful. Thank you.

Mr. McCracken. Thank you.

Mr. Martinez. Our next panel consists of several corps members and Mr. David Franklyn, director of Columbus and Franklin County Youth Conservation Corps and a board member of the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps. Mr. Franklyn, would you come forward, please?

We have with us three corps members, two from the Montgomery County Conservation Corps. One is Bonnie Workman and the other is Keith Johnson. From the New York City Volunteer Corps, we have Ms. Yvette Francis.

Mr. Franklyn, why don't we begin with you?

STATEMENT OF DAVID FRANKLYN, DIRECTOR, COLUMBUS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO CONSERVATION CORPS

Mr. Franklyn. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and other distinguished members of the committee. My name is Dave Franklyn. I am the originator and the present director of the Columbus and Franklin County Conservation Corps. I am also representing, as the originator and previous chief, the Ohio Civilian Conservation Corps program, and on the board of directors of the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps.

I appreciate the opportunity to come here this morning and speak to you on behalf of H.R. 18 and H.R. 460, both of which we are in favor of, and we would also like to urge the combining of these two pieces of legislation and the ultimate passage of these two pieces of legislation.

We have a long history in the State of Ohio with respect to youth programs and Conservation Corps programs. We were the first grant recipient in the State of Ohio for the Youth Conservation Corps in 1974. We were also one of the first State grant recipients of the Young Adult Conservation Corps Program in early 1975–1976. Prior to this, though, Ohio saw the need and created a law which created the Ohio Division of Civilian Conservation prior to the Young Adult Conservation Corps being enacted. I am also

happy to report that the State of Ohio General Assembly also has before it right now a bill to create another Youth Conservation Corps program within the State of Ohio, funded by the State of Ohio, for youth 15 to 18 years of age.

To answer your question, Mr. Chairman, further that you had before the first panel with respect to Federal funds supplanting other State and local funds in these kinds of programs, I am here to assure you that, as a member of the board of directors of a national organization that has 53 state and local members of Conservation Corps programs which have continued since Federal funds are no longer available from the old Youth-Young Adult Conservation Corps program, that this gives new testimony to the fact that these programs are continuing, expanding, and being further refined as the years have gone on without Federal funding.

That is not to say that these programs are as large or as effective as they need to be without the additional Federal funds. For instance, the Ohio Conservation Corps, since it is solely funded by the state funds at this particular point, is quite smaller than it was back in the seventies when we had close to 1,000 corps members statewide. Now we are down to just under 300, but the program is alive and well.

Mr. Chairman, we in Ohio as well as around the Nation see a fantastic need at this particular time, and I won't go into the details because I think panel one did an excellent job of that in describing the need for addressing the age groups of youth that these pieces of legislation address—the economically disadvantaged youth, the high school dropouts, the need for further training. I think that is very apparent. We are here to urge the passage of these pieces of legislation and to answer any further questions that you have on them.

I personally have spent a great deal—most of my life, as a matter of fact, since getting out of the U.S. Navy—in public service and natural resources programs, both in law enforcement and national resources and teaching those programs on the college level. Ohio at the present time is not one of the highest rates of unemployment in the Nation, but we are lacking in available work force people. We have at present 7.1 percent, as of last month, overall unemployment rate in the State of Ohio, and the county in which I have just recently started an Urban Conservation Corps program has an unemployment rate of 4.6, but most of that 4.6 are people that are high school dropouts, are people that are economically disadvantaged, primarily in the minority areas.

My corps at the present time is made up of 98 percent minorities and protected class. We have an educational component. We are working on community projects that are diverse from my original background in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and not necessarily all conservation-related. That is, when I use the words "conservation-related" I mean "natural resources related."

We are working with other nonprofit corporations. We are working with nonprofit corporations such as the Columbus Neighborhood Partnership, which is sponsored by the Enterprise Foundation. We are working low-income housing for the residents of Columbus and Franklin County. We are also working with another nonprofit corporation called the Friends of the Homeless, where we

are renovating low-income housing and we are using these as temporary shelters, until we can get these people back on their feet and back into the work force.

We are looking at going into working with the elderly. There is a great need in the Columbus and Ohio area for working with elderly. We are working somewhat with other community projects in natural resources, both with the Columbus and Franklin County Park District and the Columbus Parks and Recreation Department. We are looking more and more into linking, making linkages with the private sector, and doing work that the community needs, that there is no other provision for in the community, that other nonprofit corporations are taking up and taking the lead, and we are linking up with them in getting these things done.

I might also make mention of another concern that I know that you have, and that is that the unions, particularly the public service unions, are quite concerned that we might supplant regular city, state, county, local workers in the job market. This isn't true. We work, in our case, very, very closely with AFSCME. As a matter of fact, we have one of the ranking members on the Ohio Council of AFSCME on our board of directors. She is extremely important. The Ohio Council of AFSCME is extremely behind our work. We receive excellent cooperation from them.

We are right now in the midst of drawing up a plan whereby we can better prepare our corps members to enter the union trade market, the union apprenticeships. We are working with the Ohio building trades as well as AFSCME to get these people into apprenticeship programs. Obviously, I am sure you are aware that getting into an apprenticeship program is almost more difficult than getting into some colleges today. You have to have a high school diploma. You have to have two units of algebra. You have to have this and that and, like I said, it is more difficult sometimes to get into these than it is to get into a state college that has an open enrollment policy. So we are working from that aspect.

Mr. Chairman, these programs are extremely important at this particular time, for this particular targeted group of people that we are talking about, and I would strongly urge you to look at combining these two pieces of legislation and see that they are favorably reported out of the committee.

I would like to answer any questions, Mr. Chairman, that you would have.

[The prepared statement of David Franklyn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID FRANKLYN
BOARD MEMBER,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SERVICE AND CONSERVATION CORPS and
DIRECTOR, COLUMBUS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO CONSERVATION CORPS
Before the U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities
Committee on Education and Labor
Concerning the Martinez-Panetta Amendment to
H.R. 18, The American Conservation Corps Act of 1987

May 18, 1988

Mr. Chairman and other distinguished members of the Committee. My name is Dave Franklyn. I am a board member of the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, and the developer and present Director of the Columbus and Franklin County Ohio Conservation Corps. I would like to thank you for the opportunity of appearing before this Committee.

My purpose for appearing this morning is to: (1) enlighten you on the need and success of programs such as the one presently before you, and (2) to urge you to favorably and expeditiously refer this Bill to the full Committee.

Let me first begin by telling you something of my background. I do this only with the hope that you would find in me the dedication, experience and expertise that will instill your confidence in my testimony, the success of youth programs of this type, and the need for the national youth service corps.

To begin with, after service in the United States Navy, the majority of my education and life has been spent in public service and natural resource work, all of which included part if not all a component of youth or young adult programs.

While I was a Division Chief with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio was the first state to have grant approval to operate a state grant Youth Conservation Corps Program. The YCC Program operated successfully in Ohio until 1981 when federal funds were no longer available for this program. However, I am extremely pleased to inform you that there is presently a Bill before the Ohio General Assembly to activate the YCC Program once again with state funding.

In 1975 legislation was introduced and subsequently passed creating and funding the Ohio Civilian Conservation Corps Program and creating the Division of Civilian Conservation within the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and I accepted the position as Chief of that Division. At about the same time Congress was dealing with legislation that ultimately resulted in the Young Adult Conservation Corps of which Ohio became a state grant recipient. I am happy to report that the state program is still an active, vibrant, program but greatly reduced due to the demise of funding through the federal grant program.

Recognizing the need at the local level I was asked to organize and administer the Columbus and Franklin County Ohio Conservation Corps Program. We are a small program of 27 corpsmembers and four staff. We have been operating since August of 1987 with limited funds, facilities and equipment. We operate a four day work week with an remedial education and personal development component. Most of our Corpsmembers are minorities, high school dropouts and/or have reading, spelling and math deficiencies below the national average. We are attempting to deal with these deficiencies as well as develop a work ethic, marketable job skills, employment linkages and at the same time accomplish meaningful community service work in a cost effective and cost-effective manner.

We are also forming workable linkages to other political subdivisions and non-profit Corporations in accomplishing community service work. Some examples of this is our work in housing rehabilitation with the Columbus Neighborhood Partnership a non-profit Cooperation formed with the assistance of the Enterprise Foundation to provide Low-Income Housing.

We are also working with the Friends of the Homeless another non-profit Corporation providing temporary housing for the homeless in Columbus and Franklin County. Both of these projects are giving the Corpsmembers some training and skills in housing rehabilitation and at the same time contributing a great deal to the needs of their community.

In our program we have a motto: Provide - Integrity - Confidence; Pride in ourselves, pride in our work, pride in our community and country; Integrity in our total character in the way we approach and deal with issues in our life and with others; and, confidence in ourselves, our abilities, our dealings with others and most of all confidence in a positive future.

While Ohio unemployment rates are lower than many other states, the rates for minorities, youth and underprivileged and underemployed are comparable to the national average. Ohio and its local communities need assistance too.

In closing I would like to also add that I am privileged to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, an organization that has successfully held together the existing conservation and service corps programs throughout the country as well as assisting in organizing and providing technical assistance to new programs. It is on behalf of the Columbus and Franklin County Ohio Conservation Corps and the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps representing all of the other corps programs around this great nation that I would urge the combining of H.R. 18 and H.R. 460 and into ultimate passage in this congress.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I think we probably do have a few questions, but we will ask them after we have heard from the other witnesses.

Next we will go to Yvette Francis.

STATEMENT OF MS. YVETTE FRANCIS, MEMBER, NEW YORK CITY VOLUNTEER CORPS

Ms. FRANCIS. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about the work of the New York City Volunteer Corps and to answer any questions you might have about this organization. My name is Yvette Francis. I am 18 years old and recently completed my year of service in the City Volunteer Corps.

The corps was founded in 1984 as a model for a national service in an urban center. Since that time, more than 3,500 youth have reaped the rewards of providing community service. All CVC work is done in teams of 15 young people, ranging in age 17 to 20. We come from all neighborhoods of New York City and from many different backgrounds. Volunteers learn about important issues facing all Americans, such as the needs of the homeless, the importance of voters' registration, and the need to preserve and enhance our urban parks.

Now let me tell you something about myself and what the City Volunteer Corps means to me. I graduated from high school in 1986. For the next year I had no direction and spent my days doing little with my life. I took a job as a cashier in a department store. After a few months, I decided I was going nowhere. My friend told me about an opportunity to pursue my education, obtain a scholarship, and provide much-needed service to the people of New York. I was able to accomplish this through the City Volunteer Corps.

During my year with the corps I served in hospitals, schools, neighborhood parks, and I delivered food to the homebound elderly. My community service work allowed me to work with my peers, experience the feelings associated with helping my fellow citizens, and learn more about the neighborhoods throughout the city. CVC helped me to grow in many ways.

An example of the change I experienced in the corps was when I worked with the elderly in an nursing home. Before my service in the corps. I thought the elderly were feeble, didn't know very much, were childlike and dependent. After 4 months of really getting to know them, I found them to be wise and friendly. My service experience took me beyond a professional relationship with my clients. We became friends.

As a City Volunteer Corps member, I had the opportunity to take part in college preparation classes as well as college courses. This formal educational component was an important part of my development during my year with the City Volunteer Corps.

Above all, CVC helped me feel good about myself and directed me towards my next step—college. The corps gave me the confidence I needed to feel that I would succeed. Now that my year of service is completed, I have earned a $5,000 scholarship which I will use this September when I enter the State University of New York at Binghamton.

As a result of the City Volunteer Corps, I am a more responsible person and I have a goal that I know I can achieve. I think that many more young people should be given the opportunity to change their lives just as I have changed mine. I thank you.

[The prepared statement of Yvette Francis follows:]

CITY VOLUNTEER CORPS
842 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10003
212 473 6444

Testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on Education and Labor

Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities

Rep. Matthew G. Martinez, California, Chairman

Yvette Francis, Graduate — Wednesday, May 18, 1988

New York City Volunteer Corps — Washington, D.C.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about the work of the New York City Volunteer Corps and to answer any questions you might have about this organization.

My name is Yvette Francis. I am 18 years old and recently completed my year of service in the City Volunteer Corps. The Corps was founded in 1984 as a model for national service in an urban center. Since that time more than 3500 youth have reaped the rewards of providing community service. All CVC work is done on teams of 15 young people ranging in age from 17 to 20. We come from all neighborhoods of New York City and from many different backgrounds. Volunteers learn about important issues facing all Americans, such as the needs of the homeless, the importance of voter registration and the need to preserve and enhance our urban parks.

Now let me tell you something about myself and what the City Volunteer Corps means to me. I graduated from high school in 1986. For the next year I had no direction and spent my days doing little with my life. I then took a job as a cashier in a department store. After a few months I decided I was going nowhere. My friend told me about an opportunity to pursue my education, obtain a scholarship and provide much needed service to the people of New York. I was able to accomplish this through the City Volunteer Corps.

During my year with the Corps, I served in hospitals,

schools, neighborhood parks, and I delivered food to the homebound elderly. My community service work allowed me to work with my peers, experience the feelings associated with helping my fellow citizens, and learn more about neighborhoods throughout the City.

CVC helped me to grow in many ways. An example of a change I experienced in the Corps was when I worked with the elderly in a nursing home. Before my service with CVC, I thought the elderly were feeble and didn't know very much, were childlike and dependent. After four months of really getting to know them, I found them to be wise and friendly. My service experience took me beyond a professional relationship with my clients--we became friends.

As a City Volunteer Corps member, I had the opportunity to take college preparation classes as well as college courses. This formal educational component was an important part of my development during my year with CVC.

Above all, CVC helped me feel good about myself and directed me towards my next step--college. The Corps gave me the confidence I needed to feel that I would succeed.

Now that my year of service is completed, I have earned a $5,000 scholarship which I will use this September when I enter the State University of New York at Binghamton. As a result of the City Volunteer Corps, I am a more responsible person, and I have a goal that I know I can achieve. I think that many more young people should be given the opportunity to change their lives just as I have changed mine.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Francis.
With that, we will go to Mr. Johnson.

STATEMENT OF KEITH JOHNSON, MEMBER, MONTGOMERY COUNTY CONSERVATION CORPS

Mr. JOHNSON. Hello. My name is Keith Johnson. I am from Montgomery County Conservation Corps.

I would just like to say the Montgomery County Conservation Corps has offered me a lot—GED skills, carpentry skills, and landscaping experience. The course offers you a class at Montgomery College called "New Horizons." "New Horizons" is a career development class. We practiced job interviews on videotape and we learned a lot about ourselves. After you complete the class, you get a resume and a certificate.

The program also teaches you a lot about the environment and the community. We do a lot of great projects, such as build playgrounds, build split-rail fences, and plant trees. We built a shelter for the homeless and an outside classroom for schoolchildren at the Smith Center. We also planted more than 4,000 trees at the Smith Center.

After you have been with the corps for 6 months or a year, they will help you find a permanent job or set up an internship with another company. Internships can be with Parks and Planning, Weatherization, or other county agencies.

This job has helped me a lot. It changed my attitude. At first I didn't really care about anything. This job made me start to really care about myself.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Keith Johnson follows:]

STATEMENT OF KEITH JOHNSON
Corpsmember, Montgomery County Conservation Corps
Concerning
H. R. 18, The American Conservation Corps Act

The Montgomery County Conservation Corps has offered me a lot, GED classes and Carpentry skills and landscaping experiences. And the Corps offers you a class at Montgomery College called New Horizons. New Horizons is a career development class. We practiced job interviews on video tape and we learned a lot about ourselves. After you complete the class, you get a resume and a certificate.

MCCC also teaches a lot about the environment and the community. We do a lot of great projects, such as build playgrounds, build split rail fences, and plant trees. We built a shelter for the homeless, and an outside classroom for school children at the Smith Center. We also planted more than 4,000 trees at the Smith Center.

After you have been with the Corps for six months or a year, they will help you find a permanent job or set up an internship with another company. Internships can be with Park and Planning, weatherization, or other county agencies.

The job has helped me a lot. It changed my attitude. At first, I didn't really care about anything. This job made me start to really care about myself.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Johnson.
Ms. Workman?

STATEMENT OF MS. BONNIE WORKMAN, MEMBER, MONTGOMERY COUNTY CONSERVATION CORPS

Ms. WORKMAN. Hi. My name is Bonnie Workman and I am 18, and I am with the Montgomery County Conservation Corps.

The Montgomery County Conservation Corps has offered me an alternative route to a better future, as well as a different attitude about my environment. Before, my future seemed hopeless. Working two fast food jobs to support myself and being a high school dropout, I thought there was no future for me and that I couldn't go much further with my life, until I heard about the Conservation Corps.

I started with the corps in November, and since then I have received carpentry training and passed the course. I have completed the "New Horizons" course at Montgomery College, which teaches about jobs, how to go about getting a job, learning to write resumes and cover letters, and how to present yourself in an interview. Also, this past Saturday I tested for my GED. If I pass, which I am confident of, thanks to my teacher, Cheryl Franks, it will open doors to college, which I have high hopes for attending college this year.

As well as educational benefits, we also help the community. The projects we do vary. One job I really think gave us some pride was shoveling snow for the low-income elderly. Most people see teenagers as young adults who don't care about the environment or show any respect for older people. This job made it possible for the people to leave their homes for necessities that the snow prevented them from, and it also made the older people see that people still care for the welfare of others, and it made the corps members feel good to know that we are capable of helping those in need.

Also, the corps gave me understanding that if we, the people, don't take care of our environment now, then one day it won't take care of us, and we need the land and it needs us. The future of our country goes in the hands of our children, and if we don't show that we care and don't provide the programs needed, then the children won't grow to care.

All of the kids who attend the corps have some type of problem, whether it is the law or school or even just confusion about what to do with their lives, but these kids cannot overcome their problems if there isn't a chance given. The Conservation Corps is a great chance for young people.

[The prepared statement of Bonnie Workman follows:]

STATEMENT OF BONNIE WORKMAN
Corpsmember, Montgomery County Conservation Corps
Concerning
H. R. 18, The American Conservation Corps Act

The Montgomery County Conservation Corps has offered me an alternative route to a better future, as well as a different attitude about my environment.

Before, my future seemed hopeless. Working two fast food jobs to support myself and being a high school drop-out, I thought that I couldn't go much further with my life until I heard about the Conservation Corps.

I started with the Corps in November. Since then, I have received Carpentry training and passed the course. I've completed the New Horizons course at Montgomery College which teaches about jobs, how to go about getting a job, and learning to write resumes, cover letters, and how to present yourself at an interview. Also, this past Saturday, I tested for my GED. If I pass, which I'm confident of, thanks to Cheryl Frank, our GED teacher, it will open doors to college. I have high hopes for attending college this year.

As well as educational benefits, we also help the community. The projects we do vary. One job I really think gave us some pride was shoveling snow for low-income elderly. Most people see teenagers as young adults who don't care about the environment or show any respect for our older people. This job made it possible for the people to leave their homes for necessities that the snow prevented them from. It made the older people see that people still care for the welfare of others. It made the Corpsmembers feel good to know that we are capable of helping those in need.

Also, the Corps gave me understanding that if we the people don't take care of our environment now, then one day, it won't take care of us. We need the land and it needs us.

The future of our country goes in the hands of our children, and if we don't show we care and don't provide the programs needed, then the children won't grow to care.

All the kids who attend the Corps have some type of problem, whether it's the law or school, or even just confusion. But these kids cannot overcome their problems if there isn't a change given.

Conservation Corps' are a great chance for young people.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you.

One of the things that Ms. Workman just touched on is something that I think a lot about, and I know other Members do, too. A while back we heard a speech in which the person making the speech made what I consider a very moving and vital statement, and that was that we need to provide an opportunity for our young people to know the experience of work so they can have confidence in themselves and hope or pride in the future. I can't remember which of the two words, but either one of them would be adequate and both might be appropriate.

In your motto you almost say the same thing. It is in your written testimony. You didn't cover it in your spoken testimony, but you say:

> Provide integrity, confidence, pride in ourselves, pride in our work, pride in our community and country, integrity in our total character, in the way we approach and deal with the issues in our life and with others, and confidence in ourselves, our abilities, our dealings with others, and most of all, confidence in a positive future.

I think that is quite a statement, and it leads me to ask Ms. Workman, because she touched on it, about the kinds of young people that come into the corps and with whom you have met and talked. Please, give me some reflections on some of those people and some of the changes in their attitudes.

I remember once in a Job Corps center in Los Angeles I met a young man and a young woman. One was the president of the student body there. The other was a young man just about to graduate from the corps. He was excited about going into the Marine Corps, in which he would learn to be a mechanic on helicopters. The enlistment contract had already been signed. He had qualified because of the ability to gain a high school diploma through the Job Corps center there.

One of the things that I noticed about these two young people was their extreme confidence in themselves. I thought to myself, "You know, with the confidence that both of these young people show, they would be able to be a success no matter what kind of adversity they had to face." With that statement, which I guess in retrospect was a dumb statement, the director there at the corps reminded me that these young people when they came into the Job Corps center there, were not the same people they are now. They had changed dramatically.

They took me down to one of the indoctrination courses where they first bring the young people. The orientation class was being conducted by someone who has great sensitivity to the moods and attitudes and feelings of the young people, and I saw some very bitter young people there, people with chips on their shoulders. I remembered back to my own youth, when there was a period of time when I had a chip on my shoulder, until somebody reminded me, "Stop feeling sorry for yourself. You are the only one that can do anything for yourself, if you develop the desire and the ambition to do it."

I thought about these two young people and then realized that great, significant change they made from the time they entered to the time they were leaving, and the confidence they exuded and complete assurance in their own minds that they were going to now be able to accomplish what they wanted to accomplish. They

had a goal and they had a dream, and there was no doubt in my own mind that they would eventually accomplish that. The one young man was, like I said, joining the Marine Corps. The other young lady was going to become a registered nurse, and she had already taken and passed the test and was now going to have for herself a very worthwhile vocation, and she was full of ambition beyond that, even.

In reference to all of that that I have just said, would you give me some of your own impressions of the other corps members with whom you have met and dealt. Have you have seen them change through the experience of work?

Ms. WORKMAN. Well, when I started the Corps it was at the time a job, just to get my GED. As people start working there, I see the same thing. They don't care. They think they are going to get a future and get out, but once you start working there with other people, you start to care about yourself and what happens. The people there influence you and give you inspiration, because before a lot of these people came to the corps, they thought, "I can't. What am I going to do? There is nothing I am qualified for, and what can I contribute to this world."

When they come to the corps, maybe they don't want to spend the rest of their lives contributing to the environment, but they know that they can make a contribution in some way to the country, and that they feel important, and that they can go after it, and that they are capable. Maybe school wasn't their route, but they know there is a way. If someone shows they care, then all it takes is that, to get up and show them that what they did helped, so these people feel confident. They know they can do it.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you.

Mr. Johnson, sometimes people join initially just because they have nothing else to do, wondering what this might lead to, going into it in an experimental way. Was that a little bit of your attitude when you started out?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, because at first I had moved over here like last September, in Montgomery County, and I got put out of school and I really wasn't doing anything, so I went up to a school counselor and she told me to come down to the corps and try it out. So I tried it out and I liked it, and I still do. I have been there for 9 months. I already took my test for my GED. I have my carpentry skills. I went to "New Horizons" and passed the class.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Do you feel you have more confidence in yourself now than you did when you started out?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, I do.

Mr. MARTINEZ. And also the idea of being involved with people, doing something that is productive and worthwhile, does that makes you feel pretty good?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. MARTINEZ. You can sense that, almost.

Ms. Francis, you exude a tremendous amount of confidence. Your written statement was excellent, and from your testimony it seems you have come a long way from where you first started out. Would you like to tell us a little bit more about that, and then also let us know about your reflections on other people with whom you have been in the corps and how they changed?

Ms. FRANCIS. Well, at first I had an idea of what I wanted but I didn't have the confidence to go for it and do what I knew I had to do. Many people that come into the corps, they don't even realize that they have certain goals that they want to achieve, but after being there in the corps, and they have to attend classes, whether it be GED or college prep, they are encouraged to go forward to college or wherever, to get a job. As your year goes by, you learn to cooperate with people, you become more confident in yourself, and you are able to accomplish great things, yes.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Do you get the feeling that we are all pretty much the same, and there is nothing that we can't do if we try?

Ms. FRANCIS. Yes, but some of us need a little push sometimes.

Mr. MARTINEZ. A push, yes. If we put ourselves in a position to be pushed, sometimes we find ourselves pulling other people along, don't we?

Ms. FRANCIS. Yes, but sometimes you don't have the confidence that you need, and somebody should be there to help you along, to make sure you reach your highest point.

Mr. MARTINEZ. See, that is the idea, that there are a lot of young people that somehow in their mind they know that they can do better, that they can contribute, but they don't know how. They find sometimes you have to push. You are all fortunate to have put yourselves in a position so that you could be pushed along. You have to set a certain expectation for the young people themselves, and I think a lot of them will rise and meet that challenge, don't you?

Ms. FRANCIS. Yes.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you.

One last question, and this is something that is going to come back to us as we go through this. Many people are going to say, "Well, the local communities, the counties and States already are doing it." You are already doing it on a county level, and now you say that the State has realized the importance of this kind of a program and is going to initiate a State-funded program. Do you agree with the answer we give those who do not totally support this now. We tell them. Yes, the counties and the States are doing it but they still have unmet needs with which they need help. What would be your answer?

Mr. FRANKLYN. Mr. Chairman, at the present time my program on the local level, Columbus and Franklin County, is funded for 24 corps members. There is a need and a capacity there for us to put on 200 corps members. It is only because of the lack of funds. We have the matching funds. We could qualify under the bill as it stands today, with the matching portion of the funds, to increase our program.

There again, on the State level with the Ohio Civilian Conservation Corps Program, as I stated before, there are approximately 280 corps members right now. Back when we were participating in the Young Adult Conservation Corps program that was federally funded, we had over 1,000 corps members, so we have the expertise, we have the staff, we have the ability, and the need is there. It is only a matter of funding.

Mr. MARTINEZ. You mentioned AFSCME. Let me say that AFSCME is one of those organizations that has a concern about

displacement of public employees, and justifiably so. Their big concern is that to the degree that these programs are being conducted now, there is no great threat, but if there is an expansion, there may be a threat. I would like you to respond to that.

Mr. FRANKLYN. Again, Mr. Chairman, as I stated with my previous answer, on the basis of the need, no. The work is there. The need is there for the enrolles.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I think the key is the need for the type of work that the public employees are not doing now and are not able to do, because even in their work force—and the tax base that pays for those workers through the government budget—there are not enough people to meet that unmet need.

Mr. FRANKLYN. Yes, that is true. That is true. I might also make a comment on the other kinds of work that we are doing through the Friends of the Homeless and the Neighborhood Partnership, where we are developing housing for low-income people. These are not public employees. The other work that is getting done is by private contractors and, as a matter of fact, they are having trouble getting enough private contractors to do this kind of work. There is just an abundance of other private sector work for these contractors to participate in, and they don't have to take these jobs.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you.

Mr. Hayes?

Mr. HAYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to commend each of the panelists for having made us beneficiaries of what has been excellent testimony. I want to commend especially the three young people who stuck to it—at least you are sticking to it—to the point where you are reaching out. So many of our young people have given up, gone the wrong direction, been victimized by crime and perpetrators of crime, many of them. You are trying. Stick to it. There is no question about it, you are on the right track and the right path.

Even though we must recognize that the programs which you are part of are not enough to solve the problem that we are faced with when it comes to joblessness, being victimized by drugs, it is at least in some instances—and I am not being critical by saying this—in some areas the situation is so severe that these kinds of programs are tantamount, by comparison, to trying to reset a broken arm with a band aid, so to speak.

To you, Mr. Franklyn, if I understood you correctly, you said that in the State of Ohio, at least in that section which you are part of, which your organization operates in, the unemployment is somewhat down. I have had the opportunity, in pushing my "Economic Bill of Rights," (H.R. 8870) that is authored by the chairman of our Education and Labor Committee, Congressman Hawkins, to make quite a few visits into the State of Ohio, particularly the western part of the State of Ohio and in the Cleveland area. The jobs, industrial jobs that have been lost, particularly in the steel industry, some are gone forever. The wage levels that people received were much higher, for those who have been able to find jobs, and the wages they have to accept are much lower, some in the service industry, which leaves some of them working but still below the poverty line.

I have some criticism with even the Department of Labor's method of really tracking the number of people who are still out of work in this country. The numbers really don't reflect the totality of the problem when it comes to joblessness. To discount people who have exhausted their unemployment compensation, or count people who are working part time as being full-time employees, or those who have stopped looking for jobs, we just don't bother about counting them any more, so when we talk about the level of unemployment, I don't think we are getting the true picture.

I just want to say we need to keep on keeping on. I am to see that you are supportive.

The young lady there who is going on to get her postsecondary education, I know it took courage but you may get your reward somewhere along the line.

To you, young man, your program, I understand that it has attached to it, after you are there 6 months to a year they have a placement program that either they put you on a job or into some internship program which keeps you at least employed, and doesn't just drop you with nothing to do.

To you, young lady, I marvel at your courage and determination. Lord knows, a lot of other people, I wish they were following the same path that you are in this great Nation of ours.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Hayes.

Once again, let me thank the panel for appearing before us. Your testimony is invaluable to us. We appreciate it. Thank you again.

We are now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:35 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]